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NEW JERSEY SAYS: "NO!"

*"I covet for New Jersey the honor of showing the way to liberty * * *."*

—Gov. Woodrow Wilson, in his second annual message to New Jersey Legislature, January 14, 1913.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSION ON MILITARY TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

IN

HIGH SCHOOLS

TO THE

NEW JERSEY LEGISLATURE

SESSION OF 1917

Reprinted in full by the
American Union Against Militarism

REPORT

To the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

Pursuant to an act of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, entitled "An act to create and provide for a commission to investigate and report upon military training and instruction for national defense in high schools," approved March 18, 1916, the following were appointed to serve upon a commission known under the act as the "Commission on Military Training in High Schools": A. Dayton Oliphant, Assemblyman from Mercer County, Chairman; William W. Smalley, Senator from Somerset County; Henry Snyder, Superintendent of Schools, Jersey City; Don C. Bliss, Superintendent of Schools, Montclair; and Winfield S. Price, of the New Jersey National Guard.

The Commission suffered a serious loss in the death of Senator Smalley, which occurred December 27, 1916. He was deeply interested in the work of the Commission and took an active part in its investigations up to the time of his illness.

After their appointment the members of the Commission met and organized and arranged for a series of public meetings to be held in different cities of this State. All persons interested in the subject of military training in the schools were invited to attend these meetings and address the Commission, or to submit to the Commission any pertinent printed or written data or information. Each meeting was arranged for well in advance of the time for its holding, and press notices were duly placed in the papers published in the vicinity of the place of holding each meeting several days in advance of the date of the meeting. The meetings were held at Trenton, Newark, Plainfield and Jersey City.

The Commission has given full consideration to all communications which have been presented to it and to all available information bearing upon the subject under investigation, has thoroughly studied all plans of military instruction followed in this country and other countries, or proposed for consideration, and has made a special study of the military instruction offered to the pupils in the high schools of the State of Wyoming.

Photo of President Wilson on cover copyrighted by Harris and Ewing.

I.

Those who urge the military training of pupils of the high schools urge it mainly as a preparation for manhood service in time of war. It is not claimed by recognized authorities, so far as we have been able to ascertain, that such training of pupils will be alone sufficient to make efficient soldiers. It must be admitted that to be effective it must be supplemented by adequate special training subsequent to the period of school attendance. This State has not made provision for such supplementary training. Nor has the National Government provided the method or the means whereby adults may be trained in sufficient numbers to supply the demand in time of need.

Many persons, who advocate military training in the schools, regard it alone as sufficient for military purposes. This view is very superficial and would not be mentioned here except for its prevalence. Such persons do not carry it to its logical conclusion, and perhaps do not desire to do so. Juvenile training must, at some time, be followed by manhood training and service; otherwise it can have no value.

Furthermore, no effective plan of universal military service by adults or even of the service of classes of adults, selected for the purpose of limiting the number, has been adopted by this State or the National Government. The Commission is aware of the constitutional and statutory provisions made by the nation and the State for the service of the militia of the State, but does not regard these as constituting such a plan.

It follows that an inquiry such as this, which is limited to the propriety of military instruction in high schools, must be too narrow, since it cannot include a consideration of the subsequent and much larger and more highly specialized part of the course of instruction which may be designed to train the soldier. It follows equally, logically, that in the absence of any sufficiently comprehensive plan of the service of adults, the pupils for whose military training we may lay the foundation may never desire or be required to serve as soldiers.

A complete course of instruction of any kind must aim at definite results and must be designed in its entirety to secure these results. A thorough and satisfactory study of the problem under consideration

would include the whole course of military instruction necessary to produce the efficient soldier, in which the military instruction of high school pupils, if required or desired, would be only preliminary or fundamental. As has been said, your Commission is not expected to consider the larger problem, but reasoning backward from the results to be secured by a complete course of instruction has endeavored to reach a conclusion as to whether it is necessary or desirable that military instruction in high schools should form part of such a course.

Just as it is difficult to consider the military instruction of high school pupils without keeping in mind the rest of a complete course, so it is difficult to see why New Jersey or any State should feel obligated to assume the burden of training soldiers for the national defense without the full coöperation of the other States and of the Federal Government. The common defense is a matter of national concern and duty. While the citizens of this State may feel impelled by patriotic fervor to assume military service, their numbers cannot be large enough unless the citizens of the other States feel the same impulse. For a similar reason, the State is not justified in acting alone, without similar action by other States, in imposing on the pupils of its high schools the duty of military preparation. In saying this we do not wish to be understood as desiring to urge that the pupils of this State ought to be relieved of the duty of preparing for participation in the common defense, but do desire to insist that such isolated action will be insufficient and comparatively useless. Congress has power "to provide for the common defense" by training those who are included in the militia. It has no power to direct the courses of instruction in the schools of the States. Nevertheless, the military instruction of adults and of the pupils of the schools is a matter of national policy and must be treated as such either by Congress alone, or by Congress in coöperation with all the States. It has been said that if the States legislate independently in the matter, the instruction will be diverse and will follow as many courses as there are States, and that there can be no harmony of action. We do not object to such independent legislation for that reason, but for the reason that there will be no certainty of proper action in any State, that military training will be found "in spots," and might just as well be omitted.

II.

It is not easy to justify the selection of the high school pupils of the State as the only young people who shall be the recipients of military training. The duty of the common defense is one which belongs properly to all who are physically capable, and none should be deprived of the opportunity of qualifying himself, if such opportunity is offered to any, to perform this duty effectively. It cannot be claimed that the boys of the high schools are exceptional, and that they are the only ones who can receive this instruction profitably. If there is any advantage in it, all boys equal in age and physique to high school boys can receive it with equal probability of profit. If it is claimed that the reason for providing this instruction for the high schools is that the pupils can best afford the time for it, it must be answered that very many of these derive an income from labor out of school hours which enables them to attend school. These are as worthy of exemption from military instruction as those who leave school because they lack the ambition to continue their education or because they are compelled to do so by circumstances. Whether this instruction is compulsory or optional with pupils of the high schools, if required or offered at all, it should apply to all boys, out of school as well as in school, of prescribed ages and strength.

Such exercises of a military character, as have been introduced into high schools, have not served appreciably to induce pupils to remain in school, or, in other words, to render inoperative those influences which tend to make pupils leave school. It must be concluded, therefore, that if military instruction in high schools is regarded not as a privilege but as an obligation, it will impose an additional burden upon education, which the pupils over fourteen years of age may evade by leaving school, if they so desire. It will, therefore, serve to counteract the influence of the stimuli, statutory and social, which are applied for the purpose of prolonging school attendance.

Military training and service, if they are necessary, are an obligation of citizenship, not of education alone.

It is difficult to contemplate with satisfaction or even complacency the social cleavage which is bound to result from a system of military in-

struction which is applied to high school pupils and not to other boys. To assign or reserve the privilege, or duty, or obligation, however it is regarded, of preparing to fight for the country to the better educated class is just as repugnant to democratic ideals as was the practice in days long gone by of leaving it to the nobility. To select high school pupils for this training is open to the same objection as would be a plan of selecting adults for actual military service solely on the basis of their occupations or professions, a plan which would receive no consideration.

It may be said that military training in high schools can be defended on the ground that the higher education of the pupils makes it possible that they will become officers. But if this is so, what provision is there for training the private soldier?

Considering the proposition from all points of view, we are forced to the conclusion that it is suggested not by a consideration of military or educational propriety, but by the existence of the public-school organization. In this case, as in many others, the ease with which the plan may be grafted on it, makes a stronger appeal than the merits of the plan or the probability of its success.

III.

Thus far we have considered the proposition of juvenile military instruction as involving the separation of the boys of the State into two classes, viz., those attending the high schools and those not attending these schools, and have given specific reasons for concluding that it is not advisable to use only the former for military purposes. There are, however, many important considerations of a general character, which apply with especial force not only to the military training of high school boys, but to that of all boys in all secondary and elementary schools, and which must be mentioned in this report.

It is specially significant that none of the great nations of Europe, in which the military service of adults has been universal and compulsory, and which have shown phenomenal efficiency in the present war, has thought it necessary to resort to the military training of its boys. With

the most instructive and convincing example of these nations before us, does it not seem incomprehensible that our State and National Government should seem to shrink from the compulsory military training and service of adults and at the same time prefer to consider the imposition of compulsory training upon minors, whose dependent condition prevents the possibility of the refusal of such training? Even the federal military system of Switzerland, which exacts compulsory service from men over twenty years of age, and which is looked upon with much favor as being peculiarly adapted to a republican form of government, does not impose compulsory training upon school boys.

Military authorities are by no means united in its advocacy. General Leonard Wood has recently said, "Personally, I do not believe we should give the training until the year in which the youth becomes 19." General Baden-Powell said, "Drill a school boy and spoil a soldier."

The military training of boys gives no assurance that they will enter military service voluntarily when they become men. It is well known that comparatively few of those who have been members of school cadet corps enlist as members of the National Guard. The recent experience of Australia is significant. Although it has for some years had compulsory military training for males between fourteen and twenty-six years of age, and its people might consequently be regarded as prepared and zealous for service, the number of enlistments in the present war has fallen far short of the expectations and requirements of Great Britain. Furthermore, the people by referendum last fall rejected the proposition to adopt conscription or compulsory service in the greatest crisis in their history. On the other hand, in our Civil War, New Jersey, without preliminary training of any kind, either of men or of boys, furnished 10,000 more men without conscription than the National Government required.

Training in the real work of the soldier, to be of value, should be conducted under conditions which are as nearly like actual war conditions as it is possible to make them, and should include such operations as entrenching, marching with full service equipment, all the activities of camp life, abundant practice in the use of weapons—rifles, bayonets,

grenades, machine guns, artillery of all kinds.* It must be admitted that boys of high school age cannot undergo practical training of such a strenuous character with any hope of success, and, it must also be said, without fear of serious injury. At the same time, it ought to be said that much of this work of real training could not be done because of lack of facilities.

IV.

It is sometimes claimed that military training is the best agency for inculcating obedience. But if this claim is carefully considered it will be found that obedience to military authority is generally unthinking. It is often blind and superficial, not real. During actual war men willingly undergo training because the work is definitely motivated; but when peace comes and men go into barracks, they feel that there is nothing of value in drill and there is a consequent tendency to evade its requirements. This kind of obedience has been and may be secured by similar school methods. It is obedience under restraint. When this is removed, laxity in discipline often follows. The discipline of the schools aims not at isolated acts of obedience under special circumstances, but at the *habit* of obedience to elders and persons in authority. It is a psychological fallacy to suppose that obedience to military authority, indeed, obedience exacted under any peculiar circumstances, may automatically be translated into the general habit of obedience. The same may be said of such qualities as alertness, promptness, industry, truthfulness, etc. **It is by no means capable of demonstration that those who have had military training, or been subject to military discipline, are superior to other citizens in the possession of these qualities.**

V.

The development of patriotism in our youth is sometimes urged as a reason for introducing military instruction in the schools. Military

* See the testimony on the worthlessness of "conventional military training," given by Major William C. Harllee, of the U. S. Marine Corps, before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, January 5, 1917, and re-printed in the Congressional Record, February 17, 1917. Note by American Union Against Militarism.

forms and observances may furnish opportunities for the manifestation of patriotic feeling, but they cannot be regarded as its cause. They cannot even always be regarded as evidences of its existence. There are more effective, more certain methods of teaching real, intelligent patriotism. Emphasis must be placed upon the study of our country's history, of its social and economic development and relations, of its principles and institutions, of its provisions for the prosperity, happiness, and welfare of its people, and of its civic and social life, and not upon such a single, narrow activity as military instruction.

Obedience, patriotism, orderly behavior, and other desirable traits which have been or might be mentioned, are not results peculiar to military training, nor are they qualities which belong peculiarly to military service. They are qualities which every upright, useful citizen ought to possess, and which it is the aim of all school discipline and school exercises to develop and train. Instruction in them is ethical and moral, not military. It is only by impressing upon pupils the truth that they are necessary in all walks of life, and not only in the military sphere, that this kind of instruction may be made universal and thorough.

The education of the schools is fundamental and aims to train pupils for life. For this purpose the whole school period is needed. Real military instruction includes exercises of a highly specialized character and aims at specific purposes which are unduly emphasized and are thus likely to draw the pupil's attention away from the chief purpose of his education. Military training must aim at military service, but military service will not be the chosen occupation of many boys.

VI.

It has been our aim to consider effective military training as distinguished from military drill and such similar activities as are often found in schools, and to give our conclusions thereon, particularly as they concern high school pupils. It may be inferred from what has been said that we are opposed to military training in toto. Such an inference is not justified. While the limits of the problem presented to us do not

permit us to discuss the subject in its broader aspects, it is proper for us to say that we believe it is the duty of the citizen to defend the country should the nation decide that circumstances require it. While, as we have said before, it is not within our province to express any opinion regarding the necessity of the compulsory military training and service of adults, it is proper for us to express our conviction that, if it should be determined that preparation for defense in the form of military training is necessary, this should frankly be exacted of those who by reason of maturity and strength of body are able to receive it profitably and not of frail boys.

The term military training or military instruction is generally misunderstood or misused. Very few who use these terms think of them as designating the intensive, specialized form of instruction which is designed to train the soldier effectively for the practical work of actual warfare as it is now carried on. What most of those who discuss the matter have in mind is military drill, or the exercises of a military character in which the members of a cadet corps participate. There is a vast difference between such training and the military training which we have been considering. The former with its drills and parades is commonly regarded, even by military authorities, as seriously deficient as a scheme of up-to-date military training. To quote an Australian military authority, "Big parades are not our ideal, nor of any great practical value."

VII.

It is to the class of military drill that the Commission would assign the practice in the high schools of Wyoming, which, as has been said, members of the Commission observed. In all the cities of the State the membership in the cadet corps numbers only about three hundred. Very little, if any, of the instruction belongs to the category of real military training. No evidence of regular, persistent rifle practice, or of instruction in the activities of military camp life was found. On the other hand, experience in these activities has been very desultory. Nearly all

the exercises are those which are commonly performed on the parade ground or in school halls, and are characteristic of the school cadet corps with which all are familiar. Special attention has been given in some schools to "wall scaling," an activity which seems military in character, but which in the actual performance is a purely acrobatic exercise. There is no reference to the ultimate purpose which it ought to serve and for which it is practiced in the army. As conducted in the schools of Wyoming it aims at physical agility and perfection in team work, stimulated by the keen competition which is encouraged and must be regarded as belonging to the domain of physical training. No systematic plan, followed generally by all the schools, could be discovered; indeed, it is difficult to conceive of any well organized State plan for systematic military training in a commonwealth where only one high school employs a physical and military training instructor, and where the supervision of the drills in all other high schools is delegated to one of the regular teachers, who is paid a small additional compensation for his services. In one city wall scaling was the predominant activity, while military drill was regarded as subordinate. In others the latter was emphasized, while wall scaling was neglected. In one school membership was compulsory for all able-bodied boys, in the others it was voluntary. There was no similarity in the uniforms adopted. In one school the cadets wore a naval uniform. In one school both boys and girls were required to wear uniforms constantly during school sessions. The requirement that girls should wear uniforms was due to social reasons, not military. The practice of enlisting girls as "sponsors" seemed not generally followed. Where the practice was observed, the girls were not instructed in first aid, bandaging, and other duties commonly considered appropriate to girls, but were expected to attend the drills and other exercises for the purpose of influencing the personal demeanor of the cadets and stimulating them in their work. While instructors and cadets showed great enthusiasm, the narrowness and monotony of the instruction were clearly demonstrated by the abandonment of wall scaling in two schools, one of which

had made a record for rapidity, and the abandonment by one important city, whose high school maintained a cadet corps for several years, of the whole plan of military drill. It should be noted that the University of Wyoming, located at Laramie, which gives compulsory military instruction to its students with national aid, has not organized a cadet corps in the high school connected with its normal department. On the whole, while training of a special character may in some cases give special bent or inclination, the exercises of these schools have little military value. At the same time, information which we received proves that the special stimulus to habitual correctness of personal conduct, which military drill is claimed to give, has no exceptional force. We must commend the enthusiasm of those who organized the cadet corps in the several cities and have maintained the instruction in them, and the high ideals of physical attainment and of ethical conduct which they inspire the cadets to try to reach, but we are forced by our observation to conclude that better and more lasting results in these directions can be secured in other ways.

If the State should be inclined to consider this form of training, notwithstanding its deficiencies, it should keep in mind the cost. During the year 1915–1916, 46,103 pupils were enrolled in the high schools of the State, of whom 24,716 were girls and 21,387 were boys. If we eliminate boys who are under age or physically unfit, we should still have available for compulsory training many thousands for whom equipment and instructors would have to be provided. It is clear that the plan would cost many thousands of dollars each year, while the results obtained would be comparatively negligible so far as real military purposes are concerned. It is not necessary, however, for this State to incur the great expense involved. In accordance with Section 56 of the Act of Congress, approved June 3, 1916, and with General Orders No. 48 of the War Department, dated September 19, 1916, the Secretary of War is authorized to supply military equipment and instructors for purposes of military training to schools under certain conditions. Con-

has thus recognized the propriety of handling the matter nationally relieving the States of the expense. We are informed that Con- has not as yet made adequate financial provision to carry the act full effect. Whether legislative action by the State is necessary to orize the schools to apply the act is a question which should be mined by legal advice. At any rate, if such action is necessary, we ot recommend it, because, for reasons which have been made clear, o not favor the introduction of any form of military training, as into the schools.

nile military drill is acknowledged to be inadequate for military oses, advantage is claimed for it as a means of character develop- , of strengthening those desirable personal qualities which are ned to be peculiar to the soldier, and as a means of furnishing exer- or physical training. We have already pointed out that the devel- ent of character should be and is the object of all school exercises, that the assumption that military exercises furnish the only or the means of securing it has no foundation. **No evidence has ever been ented which demonstrates that members of the school cadet corps etter morally or are more free from moral defects than other school** .

VIII.

a sole means of physical training it is condemned almost univer- by experts in that subject. Dr. Sargent, of Harvard University, "It is not an adequate means for physical training, being not only limited in its activity, but actually harmful in its effect on boys than eighteen or twenty years of age. It does not offer sufficient ortunity for the development of the individual's powers of muscular mental coördination, and the exercise of judgment under unusual trying circumstances." Dr. Ehler, of the University of Wisconsin, "Military 'drill' is an enthusiasm-killing, contempt-developing dmill. Preparedness involves * * * primarily and funda-

mentally the possession of vitality, endurance, integrity of structure and function of every organ, alertness, bodily skill, self-control, hardihood, courage—in other words, the fullest development of the physical, mental, and emotional powers, the result of real physical education * * * . Let us not confound drill with training, nor substitute 'military drill' for physical education."

The difficulty experienced by all military companies organized in schools, in which membership is voluntary, in retaining their members, and the frequent disbandment of such companies, testify to the monotony of their work and their failure to offer permanent attraction to the young.

But in the matter of genuine physical training, in the full realization of the tremendous importance of the development and maintenance of the bodily vigor of boys and girls, of men and women, in the systematic and persistent training of all the members and organs of the body to perform their functions accurately and successfully, in the desire to maintain a nation of healthy people, we are all on common grounds.

Military authorities admit that the fundamental aim of every form of military training must be to cultivate physical health and strength. As Dr. George Fisher, Secretary of the Physical Department, International Committee, Y. M. C. A., and New York State Military Training Commissioner, puts it, "In the training camps in England it takes a full year to get the men in condition after they enlist. England's experience in this war indicates that the big problem is not primarily the training of the men in military tactics or drill, but conditioning the men. Therefore, the lesson to us should be to discover what methods can best be used to put and keep men in good physical condition."

If any evidence of the accuracy of this opinion were needed, it is necessary only to consult the records of the United States War Department. The Surgeon-General has courteously supplied us with the following statistics concerning applicant for enlistments in the United States Army:

Number of applicants for enlistment in the United States Army, furnished by the several recruiting districts, together with the number accepted or rejected in said districts, fiscal years ending June 30, 1911 to 1915.

Fiscal years ending June 30.	Total Number of Applicants.	Accepted.		Rejected.	
		Number.	Per cent of total Applicants.	Number.	Per cent of total Applicants.
1911	136,978	29,041	21.2	107,937	78.8
1912	149,693	31,587	21.1	118,106	78 9
1913	123,664	21,268	17.2	102,396	82.8
1914	168,527	35,902	21.3	132,625	78 7
1915	168,842	39,245	23.2	129,597	76.8
Total for 5 years	747,704	157,043	21.0	590,661	79.0
Annual average	149,540	31,408	....	118,132	....

Note.—These only include applicants accepted at recruiting stations. They are then sent to Recruit Depots where they are further critically examined by medical officers.

It will be noticed that these statistics are based on preliminary examinations at the recruiting stations, and do not include the final examinations which reduced still further the number of men accepted.

Of 41,168 who volunteered for enlistment in 1915 in the U. S. Marine Corps, only 3,833, or about nine per cent, were accepted.

Of the men who were in the National Guard of the States when mobilized on the Mexican border last year and mustered into the United States service, all of whom had been subject to military training and service and were assumed to be physically fit, thirty per cent had to be discharged because of physical disability.

It is evident that even if the training of our youth had military service only as its aim, that training should be physical, not military.

On the other hand, all the statistics furnished by the reports of medical experts in connection with the medical inspection of school children and college students in all countries, of the medical examiners of life insurance companies, and of all organizations for whose employees a sound body and health are requisites, testify unanimously and strongly to the wide prevalence of serious physical defects, which greatly interfere with the efficient and satisfactory performance of the duties of civil

life. In order therefore that all citizens may be properly trained and prepared to perform effectively all their duties, no matter what they may be, we recommend and strongly urge that the necessary steps be taken to provide for all the schools of the State a complete and thorough system of physical training. This system should be compulsory on all pupils, and should include carefully selected exercises adapted to the different ages of pupils and designed to protect their health, stimulate bodily functions and promote physical strength. It should apply to all girls as well as boys. It should aim to prevent bodily abnormalities or deformities, or to correct them, if they are found to exist. It should include personal and community sanitation, first aid in emergencies, bandaging, and all forms of instruction in personal safety. It should encourage outdoor activities. It should provide abundant games for all pupils in which group activities are prominent and in which appeal may be made to the spirit of competition. It may include those features of military drill which properly serve the purposes of physical training, but which must be regarded as subordinate to these purposes. It may even include practice with the miniature or the service rifle, if such practice is regarded as necessary to develop steadiness of nerve, bodily control and accuracy of sight. In the case of such exercises the educational error does not lie in their use, but in the exaggerated military purpose which they are made to serve. All the features and exercises of the thorough course of physical training which we recommend should be intimately connected and interrelated, on the one hand, with the moral or character forming instruction of the schools, and on the other, with the complete provisions for medical inspection which have already been made compulsory by law.

We take the liberty of submitting herewith two bills which embody the recommendations made above regarding compulsory physical training, and hope that they may be enacted into law.

Respectfully submitted,

A. DAYTON OLIPHANT, *Chairman,*
HENRY SNYDER,
DON C. BLISS,
WINFIELD S. PRICE.

This report effectually killed the attempt definitely to fasten compulsory military training upon the secondary schools of the State, though the Legislature, as a sop to the militarists, amended the physical training acts referred to so as to give the State Board of Education the power to add military training to the course if it so desires. It is permissive, not obligatory. The Secretary of State reports that the Board has not availed itself of the opportunity presented, although the law has been in force since March 23, 1917. Others add that the Board is extremely unlikely to do so in the face of the unanimous and carefully considered report of this Commission. In the absence of action by the State Board of Education military training can be imposed on the secondary schools of a given school district or municipality only by a majority of the voters in a local referendum on the issue.—Note by the American Union Against Militarism.

—*May, 1918.*

". . . universal military conscription, a curse—although it may at times be the less of two evils—but in itself a curse to civilization, to nationality, to progress, to humanity, and to education."—Senator John Sharp Williams, of Mississippi, March 29, 1918.

AMERICAN UNION AGAINST MILITARISM

Organized to Oppose the Adoption of a Permanent System of Universal Military Training and Service

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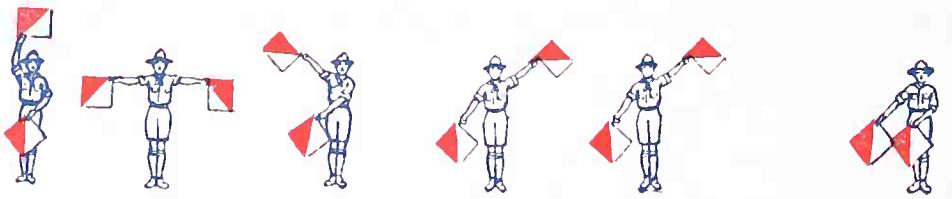
"When a permanent military policy comes to be adopted, it will doubtless be conceived in a spirit . . . so restrained as in no event to . . . excite the apprehension of nations with whom it is our first desire to live in harmonious and just accord."—From annual report, 1917, of Secretary of War Newton D. Baker.

GEN. BADEN-POWELL
SAYS:



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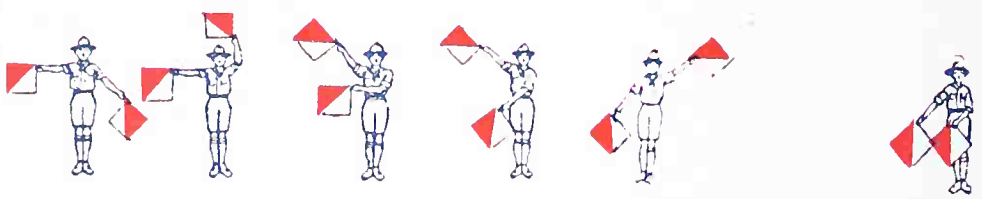

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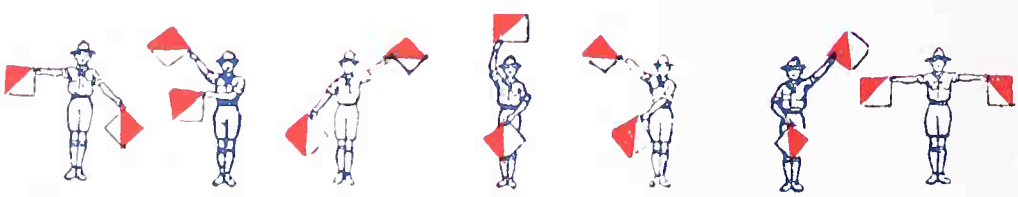

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